GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:161
ANSWERED ON:25.07.2005
DECLINE IN GROUND WATER LEVEL
Bhadana Shri Avtar Singh

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government is aware that water level has decreased in various States due to continuous famine and failure of rain resulting a crisis of potable water in those States;

(b) if so, whether the Government are contemplating to provide any special assistance to the States to deal with such situations; and

(c) if so, by when the assistance is likely to be provided to the States?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES(SHRI JAI PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV)

(a) A long-term analysis of ground water levels by the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB), under the Ministry of Water Reosurces, indicated decline in ground water levels in some parts of 362 districts of 23 States/Union Territories in the country. This decline has been due to various reasons including less rainfall.

(b) & (c) Ministry of Water Resources are not contemplating to provide any special assistance to check decline in ground water levels. 'Water' being a State subject, it is primarily the responsibility of the concerned State Governments to execute schemes to improve the ground water levels. However, the following steps have been taken by the Union Government in this regard:-

(i) CGWB has proposed a scheme at an estimated cost of Rs. 175 crores for Artificial Recharge to Ground Water and Rain Water Harvesting during the remaining part of the X Five Year Plan.

(ii) Circulation of Manual/Guidelines on Artificial Recharge of Ground Water to the States/Union Territories to enable them to formulate area specific artificial recharge schemes to check the declining trend of ground water levels.

(iii) Central Ministries/Departments of Railways, Defence, Posts, Telecommunications, Central Public Works Department and National Highways Authority of India have been requested to provide roof top rain water harvesting structures in the buildings under their control.

(iv) States/Uts have been requested to privide water harvesting structures in buildings under their administrative control.

(v) All the States/Union Territories have been requested for advising the local bodies in their respective States/Union Territories to allow rebate in property tax to persons, who adopt roof top rainwater harvesting in their premises.

(vi) CGWB has provided technical guidance on rain water harvesting to around 1800 agencies, including State Government agencies, educational institutions, private entrepreneurs and individuals.

(vii) Launching of a website on Roof Top Rain Water Harvesting (www.cgwb.net) to make aware and educate the public about various techniques of harvesting rainwater and store it for future use.

(viii) Organisation of mass awareness programmes and training courses on rainwater harvesting and artificial recharge of ground water.

(ix) Rain Water Harvesting campaign has been launched keeping in view the various target groups like youth and children, women, farmers and villagers, policy and opinion makers. Publicity through print media, telecasting of spots on the television, broadcasting messages on radio, holding of seminars, workshops, conferences etc., have been undertaken for the purpose.

(x) The Ministry of Urban Development & Poverty Alleviation, Government of India have amended Building Bye- laws, 1983, making provision for water harvesting through storing of water run-off including rain water in all new buildings on plots of 100 square meters and above in Delhi mandatory. Similarly, State Governments of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana, Rajasthan and Kerala have made roof top rain water harvesting mandatory in specified cases.